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A JUVENILE COURT CLINIC

By ELEANOR KETCHAM, R.N.

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THE practice of putting school children through a thorough physical examination is now well established in this country.

A year ago the Indianapolis Juvenile Court, finding physical defect very conspicuous in many delinquent cases, adopted the system. At the beginning of the examination experiment, both in Europe and this country, the average of those children who failed to pass as perfectly normal was in most cases fifty per cent. or over. We have found in one year of our clinic this same per cent. existing.

By order of the court every child brought into it is examined before his trial takes place, and the clinic card containing in full the examination and doctor's recommendations is handed with the commitment papers to the judge for his use in the hearing.

In cases of defective eye-sight, hearing, adenoids or any abnormality, whether or not any delinquent tendencies may be traced to the effect of reflex nerve injury, at least it must be admitted, conduct is influenced. Often the failure to see and hear well in school leads to truancy on the part of a child, idleness leads to further mischief, and the juvenile court is soon called on to find a remedy. Many times parents are present at the clinics and a full explanation is given as to what treatment is found necessary.

At first, interest is shown and a promise is obtained to have the child, if released on probation, taken to the family doctor or a dispensary. On investigation it is found that few families, without further urging, pay any attention to the recommendations.

When asked the reason the reply is given, "Well, he don't complain," or, "His father is so agin it." Ignorance and habitual neglect are strong forces to deal with. A system of education and tactful persuasive measures then call forth the best resources of a graduate nurse.

Last winter much-needed operations for adenoids, tonsils, deflected septums, circumcisions, etc., as well as medical treatment for anemias, tuberculosis, chorea, epilepsy, etc., etc., made a season of interesting work.

So far as the probation children are concerned, this work cannot be carried on without a nurse.

The Indianapolis Clinic opens up a system which will show won-

The Indianapolis Clinic opens up a system which will show wonderful results in the more comprehensive handling of juvenile court children.